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ACTION OCS-06

RELEASED IN FULL

INFO LOG-00 AMAD-01 ARA-01 CA-02 CIAE-00 OASY-00 DODE-00
DS-00 TEDE-00 INR-00 JUSE-00 L-01 ADS-00 NEA-01
NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SCT-03 SS-00 ASDS-01 DSCC-00 /016W
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O 212143Z JUL 94
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1101
INFO AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
AMEMBASSY PANAMA
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

UNCLAS BUENOS AIRES 004818

E.O. 1235: N/A
TAGS: CASC, PREL, PTER, ASEC, AR
SUBJECT: BUENOS AIRES BOMBING: A CONSULAR FOLLOW
UP ON THE RESCUE OPERATION

REF: (A) BUENOS AIRES 4685; (B) BUENOS AIRES 4694;
(C) BUENOS AIRES 4711; (D) BUENOS AIRES 4758;
(E) TEL AVIV 13961

1. SUMMARY: ON JULY 20, CONOFF AND CONASST
RETURNED TO BOMB SITE IN SEARCH OF INJURED OR DEAD
AMCITS. VISITS TO THE MARC CHAGALL JEWISH CENTER
(CHAGALL CTR), MEDICUS HOSPITAL, POLICE STATION
NO. 5, AND THE STREETS AND BUILDINGS OF THE "ONCE"
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NEIGHBORHOOD TURNED UP NO AMCITS. ALL PARTIES
WERE ASKED TO KEEP THE EMBASSY INFORMED SHOULD ANY
APPEAR. END SUMMARY

2. THE CHAGALL CENTER WAS AGAIN THE SCENE OF MOST
RELIEF ACTIVITY. THE CENTER'S LISTS OF INJURED
AND DEAD WERE CONSTANTLY BEING MATCHED AGAINST
NAMES OF THE MISSING. CONOFF FOUND THAT THE
CENTER'S INFORMATION WAS MORE COMPLETE AND CURRENT
THAN THAT RECEIVED FROM POLICE SOURCES. THE
CENTER HAS COOPERATED FULLY WITH THE EMBASSY IN
SEARCHING ITS FILES FOR AMCITS.

3. THE CHAGALL CENTER ESTIMATES THAT THERE ARE 74

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: OSCAR J OLSON
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PERSONS STILL MISSING WITH A POSSIBILITY OF THAT NUMBER GROWING, AND 13 UNIDENTIFIED CORPSES AMONG THE 35 CONFIRMED DEAD. THE CENTER IS BUSY LOCATING, CALMING, FEEDING, CLOTHING AND PROVIDING MEDICAL CARE TO THE VICTIMS AND THEIR FAMILIES. THERE IS A TEAM OF DOCTORS AND PSYCHIATRISTS ON HAND 24 HOURS PER DAY. AMONG THE MISSING IS THE WIFE OF RABBI ANGEL KREIMAN-BRILL OF THE LATIN-AMERICAN RABINICAL SEMINARY, AND CO-FOUNDER OF THE VICARIA HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATION IN CHILE DURING THE PINOCHET GOVERNMENT.

4. THE SECOND IN COMMAND OF THE ARGENTINE FEDERAL POLICE ON THE SCENE TOLD CONOFF THAT HE ESTIMATED THERE WERE 70-80 BODIES STILL BURIED UNDER THE RUBBLE. WHILE THE ARGENTINE FEDERAL POLICE ARE OFFICIALLY IN CHARGE OF THE SITE, THEIR ROLE CLEARLY DIMINISHED WITH THE ARRIVAL OF THE ISRAELI

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SPECIAL RESCUE UNIT LATE TUESDAY NIGHT, JULY 19.
AS A RESULT, THE NUMBERS OF FEDERAL POLICE PRESENT AT THE SCENE HAS BEEN GREATLY REDUCED.

5. UPON CONOFF'S SECOND VISIT TO THE BOMB SITE, IT WAS QUITE APPARENT THAT THE ISRAELIS WERE IN CHARGE. THE ISRAELI SQUAD'S IMPACT ON THE ORGANIZATION OF THE RESCUE EFFORT WAS IMMEDIATELY APPARENT. THE ARGENTINE UNITS SEEMED GRATEFUL TO HAVE THE ISRAELI'S EXPERTISE. POLICE, FIREMEN, AND THE CIVIL DEFENSE ALL SEEMED TO WILLINGLY DEFER TO THE ISRAELI AUTHORITY. EFFICIENT TEAMS OF RESCUE WORKERS AND FIREMEN WORKED TOGETHER CLEARING RUBBLE AND DEBRIS, CEASING WORK ON CUE, FROM TIME TO TIME, TO ALLOW TRAINED PERSONNEL TO LISTEN FOR SURVIVORS.

6. AN ISRAELI ARMY COLONEL CONFIRMED THAT 45 SOLDIERS HAD ARRIVED WITH TWO SPECIALLY TRAINED DOGS. THE COLONEL PREDICTED THAT THE RESCUE OPERATION WOULD BE COMPLETED IN 4 DAYS.

7. THE BLAST DESTROYED THE FACADE OF THE BUILDING WHICH FORMERLY HOUSED THE AMCIT FAMILY OF RACHELLE LAPIDUS. THIS WAS DIRECTLY ACROSS THE STREET FROM THE BOMB SITE. CONOFF TRACKED DOWN AN AMCIT RELATIVE OF THE TWO IN A LOCAL HOSPITAL, VISITING ANOTHER NON AMCIT FAMILY MEMBER. THE RELATIVE

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TOLD CONOFF THAT THE TWO WERE FINE. THE AMCIT THEN WENT THROUGH CONOFF'S COMPUTER-GENERATED LIST OF OTHER AMCITS FROM THE NEIGHBORHOOD AND CONFIRMED THAT 19 OTHERS WERE SAFE AS WELL.

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8. CONOFF AND CONASST THEN WENT TO SEARCH FOR ANOTHER AMCIT, SURNAMED CHEN, WHO LIVED ON SAME BLOCK. BOTH NEIGHBORS AND THE BUILDING SUPERINTENDENT SAID NO ONE BY THAT NAME LIVED AT THE ADDRESS.

9. BECAUSE THERE ARE SO MANY CORPSES STILL UNIDENTIFIED EITHER BELOW THE RUBBLE OR IN MORGUES, SOME TOO DISFIGURED TO IDENTIFY VISUALLY, POST CANNOT STATE UNEQUIVOCALLY THAT THERE WILL BE NO AMERICAN CITIZENS AMONG THE DEAD. HOWEVER, BECAUSE POST HAS RECEIVED NO CALLS REGARDING THE WHEREABOUTS OF MISSING AMCITS AND BECAUSE ALL OUR CHECKING HAS YET TO TURN UP AN AMCIT VICTIM, IT APPEARS LIKELY THAT NO AMCITS WERE KILLED OR SERIOUSLY INJURED AS A RESULT OF THIS HORRIBLE AND COWARDLY CRIME.

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